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of uneven merit. The best is perhaps Professor Wilmot B. Mitchell's chapter on education. Some are decidedly weak, and the volume fails on the whole to present an adequate picture of the economic and social development of the state. Maine agriculture certainly deserves more attention than it has received. An enjoyable and profitable hour, however, can be spent on the brief biographies in the latter part of the volume. Most of these are the work of Dr. Hatch. Maine contributed not only a remarkable group of leaders to the political life of the nation, but in literature, science, education, theology, law, medicine, and business her place is equally high.

From the historian's standpoint these volumes leave something to be desired. Maine was not like many of our states a mere administrative district, bounded by parallels of latitude and longitude, and with the same people, the same life, the same institutions as all her neighbors. She had a distinct individuality. There is an opportunity of which no one has yet taken advantage, to correlate economic, social, and political life. Maine drew most of her people and institutions from Massachusetts, but early in the last century Kendall and other travellers noted the lack of resemblance between parent and offspring. The drunkenness, poverty, and squalor which they mention, the occasional prevalence of religious radicalism, the opposition to banks and turnpike companies, produced the Democratic ascendancy of the earlier years, and the epidemic of Greenbackism forty years ago shows how the same tendencies persisted. Maine shared New England conservatism and frontier radicalism. Anniversary histories, however, must obviously be written with the interests of the largest possible number in mind, and Dr. Hatch's work is a worthy memorial of the one-hundredth year of statehood. It should find a prominent place in the homes, the school-rooms, and the public libraries of the state. Few states have had a more inspiring history or a better source of information in which to study it.

W. A. ROBINSON.

Portraits of American Women. By GAMALIEL BRADFORD. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1919. Pp. xiii, 276. \$2.50.)

MR. GAMALIEL BRADFORD, who has achieved an enviable success in his biographical studies, has selected for his latest volume eight American women about whom we can well afford to be enlightened. There is an undeniable thinness in the narratives; for while the chosen field is a large one, it offers no pre-eminent figures, and Mr. Bradford does well to follow his own taste, always delicate and discriminating.

Abigail Adams, woman of the world and of affairs; Sarah Alden Ripley, a scholar little known; Mary Lyon, a pioneer in the field of female education; Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of one famous novel, and of several forgotten ones; Margaret Fuller Ossoli, friend and com-

rade of eminent men; Louisa May Alcott, delight of a bygone generation of children; Frances Willard, apostle of temperance; and Emily Dickinson, author of interesting, if somewhat disputable, verse—this is the group presented to us by a biographer who is at once sympathetic and incapable of exaggerating any claim to distinction.

The most exceptional, and perhaps the most attractive, figure is Mrs Ripley. She does not seem to belong to her time or place. She does not seem at home with her excellent companions. She was that *rara avis*, a woman who loved knowledge for its own sake; who never wanted to be up and doing, but was content with the life of the intellect; who remained unstirred by political events, even the great event of the Civil War; who mastered the classics when she was a girl, and Spanish when she was seventy; who dared to call the German language "abominable", and who never learned to spell. What a power of analysis in these few words of Emerson's, describing this remarkable woman, whom—to say the truth—he did not wholly love: "She would pardon any vice in another which does not obscure his intellect or deform him as a companion. She knows perfectly well what is right and wrong, but it is not from conscience that she acts, but from a sense of propriety." Boston born, living in Concord, yet Athenian to the core. It is a combination that passes belief and staggers understanding.

Mr. Bradford offers little in the way of literary criticism, because there is no call for it. One can hardly criticize *Little Women*, or *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; and his description of Emily Dickinson's verse as "clots of fire, shreds of heaven, snatches of eternity", is striking rather than critical. He has, however, a happy art in anecdote, and a real talent for quotation. He tells us how heartily Miss Alcott hated the "vortex of debts, dishpans, and despondency", from which she rescued her family; and also—what we have always suspected—that she "never knew girls, nor liked any", except her sisters. He tells us the delightful story of Miss Willard's saying to a kind, but thoughtless, hostess who offered her a glass of wine: "Madam, two hundred thousand women would lose somewhat of their faith in humanity if I should drink a drop of wine." And he brings Miss Lyon vividly and charmingly before our eyes in the briefest of excerpts. Standing before a mirror to tie her bonnet-strings, this famous educator was heard to say dispassionately: "Well, I may fail of Heaven; but I shall be very much disappointed if I do—very much disappointed."

These are incidents pleasant to recall. There are few biographers who know what to tell and what to leave out as well as does Mr. Bradford. His own comments are humorous and keen. When he says of Emerson, "He was perhaps somewhat limited in the blind longings of the heart", we recognize a masterpiece of understatement.

AGNES REPPLIER.